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| Cabinet Report | |  |
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| Report of Head of Policy and Programmes  Author: Alice Penfold  E-mail: alice.penfold@southandvale.gov.uk  Wards affected: all |  | |
| South Cabinet member responsible: Councillor. Leigh Rawlins  E-mail: Leigh.Rawlins@southoxon.gov.uk  To: SCRUTINY  Dates: 23 June 2025  To: CABINET  Dates: 3 July 2025 |  | |

# The Way Ahead: Annual Delivery Plan 2025-2026

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| Recommendation to Cabinet To approve the Annual Delivery Plan for 2025-26 (Appendix 1), which is underpinned by the Council Plan 2025-2029. |

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| **Implications**  **(further detail within the report)** | **Financial** | **Legal** | **Climate and Ecological** | **Equality and diversity** |
| Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **Signing off officer** | **Simon Hewings** | **Nick Bennett** | **Tim Oruye** | **Mark Minion** |

### Purpose of report

1. To seek Cabinet approval for the proposed Annual Delivery Plan 2025-2026, which sets out activity that will be undertaken to progress the priorities and objectives articulated in the Council Plan 2025-2029.

### Corporate objectives

1. Following a comprehensive democratic and scrutiny process, the Council Plan 2025-2029 was adopted by Full Council on 13 February 2025. The Council Plan 2025-2029 sets out a vision, strategic priorities, and objectives for the council and forms part of the council’s policy framework.
2. The Annual Delivery Plan is underpinned by the Council Plan 2025-2029 and sets out the key activity and outcomes that will enable the council to make progress towards achieving its ambitions either through direct delivery, in partnership, or exerting its influence as a local government body.

### Background

1. The Council Plan 2025-2029 sets the strategic context for the delivery and monitoring of council services in accordance with councillor intentions. The Annual Delivery Plan, aligned to the Council Plan, sets out the key activity and outcomes that will enable the council to make progress towards achieving its ambitions. Effectively, the Annual Delivery Plan articulates how the council will implement the strategic priorities and objectives set out in the Council Plan 2025-2029 and forms the basis upon which progress will be monitored.
2. The Council Plan and Annual Delivery Plan reflect the financial landscape of the council and sit alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). To ensure it is a credible strategic framework, the Council Plan can be aspirational and ambitious but also has to be affordable and appropriately budgeted for.
3. The Council Plan targets resources towards the priorities identified in the plan, and the Annual Delivery Plan aligns activity and projects undertaken by the council to directly contribute to delivery of the plan. The Annual Delivery Plan acts as a key component of the ‘golden thread’ linking the Council Plan to service delivery.

### Annual Delivery Plan

1. Following adoption of the Council Plan 2025-2029, each year the council will develop an Annual Delivery Plan setting out a range of activity and outcomes to support delivery of the priorities and objectives outlined in the Council Plan. Following its adoption, the proposed period the Annual Delivery Plan will cover spans from July to June in a municipal year.
2. The key activities and outcomes included in the Annual Delivery Plan 2025-2026 were selected following a rigorous prioritisation process to ensure that the activity and outcomes which will contribute the most to achieving the council’s ambitions are progressed. The Annual Delivery Plan is not an exhaustive list containing all of the council’s work, rather it is a summary of key activity and outcomes which are helping to progress the ambition articulated in the Council Plan.
3. Linked to the activity and outcomes within the Annual Delivery Plan, a series of measures have been developed to measure progress. Extensive engagement has been undertaken across the organisation to understand the data it holds and how it could be used to show progress, which will help ensure existing data is utilised wherever possible.
4. Effective performance management is a crucial part of the Council Plan and associated Annual Delivery Plan, as it enables the council and residents to monitor our progress and see whether we are achieving what we have set out to achieve. A new reporting dashboard is in development, which is intended to be as automated as possible, decreasing the amount of data that needs to be entered manually. This will help reduce the administrative burden on teams, enabling them to focus on service delivery. Incremental improvements will be made to the new dashboard over time.
5. The new dashboard will make reporting more accessible and timelier to councillors, members of the public, and other interested stakeholders. The formal performance reporting arrangements will include an annual performance report to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee, alongside opportunities to monitor progress of the plan every quarter.
6. The Council Plan 2025-2029 is primarily supported by digital marketing material given the depth, level and success of the digital engagement campaign. This also enables the Council Plan to remain more agile, as digital marketing material can be amended to reflect ‘real-time’ changes, alongside supporting the council’s climate commitments.
7. In line with the communications and marketing approach for the Council Plan, the Annual Delivery Plan will be published on the council’s website to ensure it is publicly accessible.
8. As with all council policies, hard copy prints and other formats can also be made available on request.

### Financial Implications

1. There are no immediate financial implications associated with this report. The Council Plan 2025-2029 and therefore this, and future, Annual Delivery Plans will sit alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
2. Following adoption of the Council Plan 2025-2029, where necessary resources and budget are being redirected towards the priorities and objectives within it. The Annual Delivery Plan sets out the key activities and outcomes that will enable the council to make progress towards achieving its priorities and objectives as articulated in the Council Plan 2025-2029. All future budget proposals will be subject to the usual financial, democratic and scrutiny processes.

### Legal Implications

1. There are no anticipated legal implications arising from this report. Where any legal implications arise in respect of individual projects or delivery of services while implementing the Council Plan 2025-2029, these will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### Climate and ecological impact implications

1. The Annual Delivery Plan supports the Council Plan that sets the strategic vision and direction for the delivery of projects and initiatives to address climate and ecological issues and achieve better outcomes, including through the Nature and Climate Action Plan.
2. As agreed with the climate team, the use of the Climate Impact Assessment Tool is not appropriate for the high-level strategy set out in this report. The climate and ecological impacts of each project and activity are and will be assessed using the Climate Impact Assessment Tool as they come forward.

### Equalities implications

1. The Annual Delivery Plan sets out the key activity and outcomes that will enable the council to achieve its ambitions as set out in the Council Plan 2025-2029. An [Equality Impact Assessment](https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/app/uploads/sites/2/2025/06/Equality-Impact-Assessment-Form-South.pdf) has previously been completed for the Council Plan 2025-2029 which concluded that the Council Plan will have a positive impact upon all groups in the district with protected characteristics. By including inclusivity and equitability among its priorities and objectives, the council will seek to proactively ensure that all members of our community, including groups with protected characteristics, rural communities, and areas of deprivation, have access to services and opportunities.

### Risks

1. The Council Plan 2025-2029 is a strategic framework underpinned by a series of programmes of work and projects. The Annual Delivery Plan sets out the key activities and outcomes that will enable the council to make progress against the priorities and objectives articulated in the Council Plan. As the underpinning work progresses, risks will be detailed in individual project risk registers or captured in the corporate risk register and be subject to the usual democratic and scrutiny processes.
2. It is acknowledged that any identified wider factors, such as local government reorganisation and local government funding reform, may impact on the implementation of the Council Plan 2025-2029 and the ability to progress the key activity and outcomes set out in the Annual Delivery Plan. Where these risks relate to the whole council, they will be captured in the corporate risk register and will be subject to the usual democratic and scrutiny processes.

### Other Implications

1. There are no other implications arising from this report.

### Conclusion

1. The Council Plan 2025-2029 establishes a vision, priorities, and objectives for the council. The Annual Delivery Plan sets out the key activities and outcomes that will enable the council to make progress towards achieving its ambitions.
2. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the Annual Delivery Plan for 2025-2026, which is underpinned by the Council Plan 2025-2029.

### Background Papers

* Appendix 1 – Annual Delivery Plan 2025-2026

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